

REMARKS

Prior to examination, entry of the foregoing is respectfully requested.

Claims 7-9, 11, 15, 16-18 have been amended simply to delete multiple dependencies in the claims. New claims 19-27 have been added, directed to embodiments dependent upon claim 2 in view of deletion of the multiple dependencies. Support for the new claims may be found in original claims 7-9, 11, 15, 16-18. No new matter has been added.

In the event that there are any questions relating to this Preliminary Amendment, or to the application in general, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would telephone the undersigned attorney at (508) 339-3684 concerning such questions so that prosecution of this application may be expedited.

Early and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested and believed to be in order.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

By: 

Donna M. Meuth

Registration No. 36,607

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620

Date: March 22, 2001

09787737-032201

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated March 22, 2001

Marked-up Claims 7-9, 11, 15, 16-18

7. (Amended) The gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 6] claim 1 wherein said protein is a protein having an ability of inducing adventitious shoots.

8. (Amended) The gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 6] claim 1 wherein said protein is a protein having an ability of inducing branching.

9. (Amended) A vector comprising the gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1.

11. (Amended) A protein encoded by the gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1.

15. (Amended) A plant or a plant cell into which the gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1 has been introduced.

16. (Amended) A method for inducing differentiation from a plant or a plant cell said method comprising introducing the gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1 into a plant or a plant cell and then driving the expression of said gene.

17. (Amended) A method for inducing adventitious shoot formation from a plant or a plant cell said method comprising introducing the gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1 into a plant or a plant cell and then driving the expression of said gene.

18. (Amended) A method for inducing branching of a plant said method comprising introducing the gene according to [any one of the claims 1 to 8] claim 1 into a plant and then driving the expression of said gene.

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